



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Folsom Woman Dies Following Discovery in a Brush Fire During Burn Ban Patrol

ST. TAMMANY PARISH- An elderly Folsom woman has died after being rescued from a brush fire that was discovered by a State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputy during proactive burn ban patrols.

Around 1 p.m. on Sunday, August 27, the deputy was traveling south on LA 25 in the Folsom area when he spotted a brush fire that had spread to a shed on a property in the 78000 block of the highway. At the same time the deputy pulled over to investigate, a volunteer firefighter did the same and called the fire into St. Tammany Fire District #5.

As crews began extinguishing the fire, an unconscious woman was discovered within the burned area of the property. She was taken to a New Orleans hospital in critical condition but later died. An autopsy will be conducted to determine an official cause of death. While the fire did spread onto a neighboring property, firefighters were able to contain the fire quickly and ultimately extinguish it completely.

Through this investigation, SFM deputies learned the woman was an 84-year-old resident of the home who is believed to have been actively burning a debris pile when unknown circumstances led her to fall into the fire.

“Our hearts are broken for this family tonight, “ said State Fire Marshal Dan Wallis, “This is a horrific situation that should stun every single person in this state. These conditions are not exaggerated and they affect every one of us, even if you can’t see the flames and your community isn’t under threat of wildfire today. Doing any activity involving fire right now can lead to tragedy for you, your loved ones, your neighbors and your community.”

“I am so thankful that our deputy was in the right place at the right time to help give this woman a chance, but this terrible situation renews our plea to every single person in Louisiana-- Do not burn anything!”

A statewide burn ban has been in effect since August 7 but was updated on Friday, August 25 to remove all previous exceptions. Additional burn bans specific to removing exceptions for agricultural burning and prescribed burning were also issued on the 25th by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry and Governor John Bel Edwards. Violation of these orders could result in criminal and/or civil penalties.